

Message Text

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R 030951Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2903

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 5781

CINCPAC FOR POALD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: PRESS SUGGESTS TENTATIVE OUTLINES FOR NEW REGIONAL POLICY

1. SUMMARY. OUTLINE FOR NEW REGIONAL POLICY BEGAN TO EMERGE IN MAY 3 PRESS. REPLACING ANTI-AMERICANSIM OF PREVIOUS WEEKS, LINE LIKELY REST ON SELF-RELIANCE THEME ENUNCIATED IN PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH MAY 2, WHILE EMPHASIZING CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH ASEAN COUNTRIES, POSSIBLE DEMISE OF SEATO AND IMPENDING RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN INDOCHINA. ALTHOUGH LINE PRESUMABLY INTENDED TO PUT ACCENT ON POSITIVE, IT IS EXPRESSIVE OF DEEP CONCERN ABOUT U.S.INTENTIONS AND PERCEIVED THREAT TO PHILIPPINES FROM NORTH VIETNAM. END SUMMARY.

2. PRINCIPAL GUIDE FOR NEW LOOK IS PRESIDENTIAL SPEECH (READ BY DEFENSE SECRETARY) ON OCCASION 40TH FOUNDATION OF PAF, MAY 2. SPEECH CITED LESSON OF SOUTH VIETNAM AS REMINDER OF NEED FOR SELF-RELIANCE. HE IMPLIED THAT SOUTH VIETNAMESE MIGHT HAVE DONE BETTER IF IT HAD NOT RELIED SO HEAVILY ON U.S. BUT INSTEAD ON
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ITS OWN WILL AND OWN STRENGTH. "THERE IS INHERENT WEAKNESS IN

RELYING TOO MUCH ON GENEROSITY OF ANOTHER NATION, NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL. THIS ONLY ENERVATES CLIENT NATION." SPEECH ENDED WITH TRIBUTE TO SELF-RELIANT SPIRIT OF PAF.

3. SEVERAL PAPERS ALSO RAN ARTICLES RENEWING CRITICISM OF SEATO. ARTICLES SUGGESTED SEATO WAS BOTH DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT MADE PROVOCATIVE STATEMENTS ABOUT COMMUNIST THREATS TO THAILAND, AND ANACHRONISTIC BECAUSE IT FOCUSED ONLY ON MILITARY. TIME HAD COME, ARTICLES SUGGESTED, WHEN SEATO MIGHT NO LONGER BE NECESSARY.

4. PRESS ALSO NOTED APPROVINGLY VARIOUS MOVES TO RECOGNIZE NEW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS IN INDOCHINA. THEY REPORTED STEPS TO RECOGNIZE NEW CAMBODIAN GOVERNMENT AND TWO STORIES SURFACED STATEMENT THAT GOP HAD TAKEN STEPS TO OPEN RELATIONS WITH NORTH VIETNAM.

5. EVEN VALENCIA OF BULLETIN TODAY RESURFACED WITH COMMENT THAT ALTHOUGH U. S. MADE GOOD FRIENDS AND BUSINESS ASSOCIATES, THEY WERE NOT RELIABLE AS ALLIES.

6. COMMENT: WE ASSUME FROM SIMILARITY OF STORIES NOW BEGINNING TO APPEAR IN PRESS THAT THEY ARE REFLECTIVE OF AT LEAST GENERAL GOP GUIDANCE. AS SUCH, THEY ARE STILL REFLECTIVE OF CONTINUED CLAMP-DOWN ON RIFE ANTI-AMERICANISM OF PREVIOUS FEW WEEKS. THEY WOULD ALSO APPEAR TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF TENTATIVE STEPS TOWARD EXPOSITION OF MORE POSITIVE FOREIGN POLICY NOT EXCLUSIVELY ENUNCIATED IN TERMS OF ANTI-AMERICANISM. MAIN PLANK WILL OVVIOUSLY BE SELF-RELIANCE ALTHOUGH WE INCLINED TO BELIEVE SPEECH WAS SUGGESTING PHILIPPINES SHOULD BE SELF-RELIANT DESPITE U.S. ASSISTANCE RATHER THAN SUGGESTING PHILIPPINES SHOULD DO WITHOUT U.S. ASSISTANCE. AT SAME TIME, GOVERNMENT OBVIOUSLY DESIROUS OF INDICATING THAT IT IS MOVING IN CLOSE CONSORT WITH ITS ASEAN PARTNERS IN ASSESSING SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES IN AREA AND IN TAKING NECESSARY ACCOMMODATING STEPS SUCH AS RECOGNITION OF NEW COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS.

7. EFFORT TO RATIONALIZE AND DESCRIBE IN MORE POSITIVE TERMS INITIALLY GAUCHE OUTBURST AGAINST U.S. IS FAMILIAR PATTERN OF PHILIPPINE PUBLICIST. IT IS ALSO EXPRESSIVE OF CONTINUING DEEP CONCERN ABOUT FUTURE U.S. ROLE IN AREA AND PERCEIVED THREAT TO PHILIPPINES OF NORTH VIETNAMESE VICTORY.

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